

A
YOUNG MAN'S
LEGACY

TO
The Rising Generation :

Being a SERMON Preached upon the Death, and
at the Desire of

John Tappin of Boston ;

Who deceased at *Fairfield* the 10th of *October* 1672.
being in the Nineteenth year of his Age.

By *SAMUEL WAKEMAN*, Pastor of the Church
of Christ there.

Ecclef. 7. 2.

*It is better to go to the house of mourning, then to go to the house
of feasting : for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay
to his heart.*

Ecclef. 11. 9.

*Rejoyce, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the
dayes of thy youth, and walk in the wayes of thine heart, and in
the sight of thine eyes : but know thou, that for all these things
God will bring thee into judgement.*

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Ecclef. 12. 1.

Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.

BE pleased to understand, That the Text that I have now read unto you, is not of mine own choosing, but was chosen by him (a little before he left us) who is now in another World. It was his earnest desire about two or three dayes before his death (being apprehensive that his *change* was at hand) that I would Preach a Sermon for him upon this Text: His surviving Friend and Companion, who held him very dear, and with whom he left it to prosecute this his desire, hath been unsatisfiedly urgent with me in this behalf, That the earnest desire of the *dying*, and the will of the *dead* as to this matter might be fulfilled; which seconded by others, hath drawn me to this, which may be I have been too loth to attend. I would not refuse or deny, when mans will and desire carrieth with it any signification or intimation of the will of God, or shun any occasion or opportunity of doing any the least good which his Providence is commending to me, and such I dare not say but this is. You may look upon this Sermon then as the *Request* of the Deceased, as *The Legacy* which this Young man hath left by his last will to the Rising Generation. Me-thinks it seems to me, that our business with this Text at this time (mine and yours) is from the beckings of Divine Providence thereunto directing: for not onely the desire of the deceased (calling us as it were with his last breath to the consideration of this Subject) but his *Death*, nor his alone, but that of others, lately taken away (both among our selves, and in Neighbour-Plantations) whose

gray hairs and wrinkles of Age, Death hath prevented: and the solemn and awaking Providence of God in these Dispensations, are loudly calling me and you, and all of us (ye Younger sort especially, who are apt to put it off) to an early, timely remembrance of God, according to the Counsel given in our Text, *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, &c.*

THis whole Book is in the substance of it a serious calling men back unto God, a recalling men that are forgetting God, forsaking their own mercies, and following after lying vanities, from those vain, empty, fruitless pursuits, to the remembrance of him. The sum of this whole Discourse (wherein Great and Wise and Experienced Solomon is giving us in his own account, that we may know what to trust to) stand upon these two Points.

1. *That the Chief Good of the sons of men is not to be found in all Creatures under the Sun, nor in mens labours and travails about them; all the good that by the greatest industry can be gotten out of them, being but vanity and vexation of spirit, as he after a thorow tedious search had found by his woeful experience.*

2. *That mans Happiness is to be found onely in God, and in the being unto him.* This is that great Conclusion that he is laying down as the sum and issue of all, in the 13th Verse of this 12th Chapter; *Let us hear the Conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole of man.* Upon these grounds we have him throughout this Discourse, as cautioning men against Creature-pursuances, and seeking happiness where it is not to be had, and nothing can be extracted by the most skilful Chemistry but *vanity and vexation of spirit*; so, calling them to the Creator, and the remembrance of him, in whom, and wherein, their Happiness doth indeed consist.

Amongst many other Arguments, Motives and Persuasions, which we have used all along in this Book, to dissuade men from an over-mindfulness of, thoughtfulness about, and eager seeking happiness in the Creature, the Wise man drawing towards a conclusion, is urging home this great Argument, taken from the brevity of life, the certainty of approaching death, and the solemn and momentous Consequences attending and following upon it. We have him sometimes touching upon it before, but more fully falling in with it at the 7th Verse of the 11th Chapter, and prosecuting it to the 8th Verse of this 12th Chapter. Of all the Arguments which to untie and take us off from the Creature as vain, and provoke and necessitate us to the remembrance of God, these 7th

none more plain, sensible, palpable, pressing, cogent, and that may go further to convince flesh and blood, a Sensualist himself, than the consideration of the *brevity of Life*, and the *long Eternity* after; the *certainly of Death*, and the *strict Account* that follows it. This Argument, is the most forcible, taking prevalent, the Wicked man is referring to, and improving in the last place, taking in with it (as we were saying) at ver. 7. of the foregoing, and urging it home in the sequel of that, and in the beginning of this Chapter, especially upon *Young men*, that are most apt to please and pamper themselves in their flourishing Age, putting the evil day far off. But in a few words to come to our Text.

From this main Argument, taken from the *brevity of Life*, the *certainly of Death*, and the *momentous Consequences* attending it, which we have the Preacher proposing in ver. 7. & 8. of the foregoing Chapter, *Truly light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun: but if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all, yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many; all that cometh is vanity: and closely and cuttingly applying to young men, that are most apt to put it off, in ver. 9. Rejoice, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in thy sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment: We have him making two Inferences, or exhorting to a two-fold duty; the former we have in the last Verse of that Chapter, the latter in the first Verse of this, in the words of the Text: Both which he is backing with the former Argument, the *brevity of Life*, and the *certainly of approaching Death*.*

The first Inference or Duty exhorted to in the last Verse of the former Chapter is, *Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: so I do, may the young man think, while I rejoice in my youth, and my heart cheers me, while I walk in the ways of my heart, and in the sight of mine eyes; if this be not to remove sorrow from my heart, and put away evil from my flesh, what is? Such indeed is the opinion of the flesh touching sensual pleasures, but sure the judgement of the Spirit of God is quite contrary hereunto, and it is quite another thing that is here intended, viz. the putting away sorrow, by the putting away sin; the removing of the Effect, the evil of affliction and suffering, by removing the Cause, the evil of concupiscence and inordinate affection, according to the truth of that which he is elsewhere speaking, Prov 14. 13. *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness.* A holy heart and a merry heart go together, and a sinful heart and a sorrowful heart cannot, will not be long asunder; be*

that puts not away the evil of sin from his flesh, cannot long put away the evil of smart and suffering: whatever vain sensual men may imagine, the winding up will prove that of the Wise-man true, *Prov. 11. 29. As righteousness tendeth to life, so he that pursueth evil, pursueth it to his own death*: and the Reason backing it is bottomed upon the same main Argument, the *flittingness, brevity, and uncertainty of Life*, even in the young and lusty; for *Childhood and Youth is vanity*, i.e. are fading, passing, uncertain, soon spent: Young men may bear and behave themselves as if imagining their hot blood, lusty bodies, activity, beauty, would last alwayes, and their youthful pleasures never be at an end; but, *Childhood and Youth are vanity*: Death may not wait till they be gray-headed; or however, the earliest Morning hastens apace to Noon, and then to Night.

The second Inference or Duty exhorted to, you have in the words of the Text, *Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth*. As in the former he was calling off from sin, vanity, the empty pursuance of the Creature, so in this he is calling to, and putting upon the remembrance of the Creator, *q.d.* relinquish your vanities, and your sensual pleasures and contentments, which will be bitterness in the latter end, and set your hearts seriously God-ward, turn your thoughts toward the minding him. And this Exhortation of young men to the *now remembring of their Creator*, is urged upon them by the same main Argument still, The flittingness and vanity of Life, and the approaching certainty, and the evil and dark dayes of old Age and Death, *While the evil dayes come not*, &c. as in this and the following Verses; *q.d.* old Age and Death are hastening upon you, and will certainly and soon overtake you. It is the former part of the Verse, *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth*, that I shall insist upon, taking no further notice of the latter, but as it may be an Argument to enforce this. And here because I study expedition, and the *Explication* will necessarily take up some room and time, as also that the *Reason* of the duty here required of us, is couched in the expressions wherein it is commended to us, We shall first lay down the *Conclusion* or *Point of Doctrine* from the words, and then open it to you, and fetch the Reasons out of its own bowels. The *Observation* then (according to the terms of the Text, which we shall after more fully unfold) is this:

Doct. That it is every mans Duty, every young mans Duty, now in the dayes of his youth, to Remember his Creator. Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth.

It is every mans duty to remember God, it is every young mans duty to

to do it *now* in the *dayes* of his youth. For the clearing up of the Doctrine, and making way for the Application and Improvement of it, we have three things to handle and unfold: (1.) What this *Remembering our Creator* (the duty which the Text and Doctrine calls for) is importing. (2.) The Reasons of our *so doing*, which the term of *Creator* is implying. (3.) Why the Younger may not put it off, but it must be *now done, now in the dayes of their youth*.

I. What this *remembering God, remembering our Creator* is importing. *Remembering*, commonly in Scripture acceptation, is not strictly taken for the simple act of memory, the meer retaining a thing in our heads, nor is so here to be taken for any one simple act of the Soul, nor yet divers and continued acts of one and the same Faculty; but it is taken for the compleat, entire motion of the whole Soul, the whole man towards God. It is the common saying of Divines, That words of knowledge of sense in Scripture, imply affection and action, cogitation and practice, take in both the head and heart, include the whole Soul: by one word of *knowing, remembering*, and the like, is included the compleat, entire motion of the whole Soul, the whole man towards God. Such is the combination and concatenation of all the Faculties of the Soul, as of Links in a Chain, that draw one and draw all, break one and break all; upon this account any one act, or the act of any one single Faculty, as *knowing, remembering, &c.* is usually in Scripture put for the compleat, entire motion of the whole Soul. The term of *our remembering God*, so of *his remembering us*, is used ordinarily not strictly, but in such a latitude as we have been speaking, if you consult *Neh. 4. 14. Judg. 8. 34. Lev. 26. 42. Luke 23. 42.* and a number of Texts more that might be named and recited (but I fear to be tedious) you will finde the sense of the phrase to run according to the breadth which we have been saying. In a word, we then *remember God*, not when we barely think of him, but when as such we affectionately and practically acknowledge him, when we really own, and bear our selves toward him as our Creator; in sum, when the whole entire motion of the whole Soul is Godward.

Thus briefly and in general. But because the burthen of the Duty of the Text hangs upon this word *Remember*, we shall yet a little further unfold it, and shew you yet somewhat more fully, distinctly, and particularly, what the *remembering God* is implying and inferring, briefly.

1. *Remembering God*, is implying and inferring *converting, turning unto God*, *Psalm 22. 27. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord*: All men naturally are forgetting God, and turning from him, and men then *remember God*, when they convert and turn unto him: men naturally

turally too earnestly remember the Creature, and forget the Creator, go off from God, disacknowledge, disown him, which is frequently called in Scripture, *A forgetting God*, *Deut. 6. 12. Job 8. 13. Jer. 3. 25. Ezek. 23. 35.* So on the contrary, converting, turning unto God, acknowledging, owning of him, is in Scripture sense, a remembering of him, as you may see *Ezek. 6. 9, 10.* and elsewhere.

2. *Remembering God*, implies and takes in our setting up God as God, our glorifying him as God, our remembering God to be our Rock, and the high God our Redeemer, our remembering God to be, and taking and making him, as he truly is, the object of our esteem, love, desire, delight, rest, trust, and dependance: As our converting and turning unto God, so our cleaving to him, staying and abiding with him, upon these accounts highly esteeming of him, delighting, resting, trusting in him, relying and depending upon him, is our indeed remembering of him: we forget God, according to Scripture-language, when we depart from him in these respects; God complains, *Deut. 32. 18. Of the Rock that begot thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee: how is it you may see before in ver. 15. But Jerusalem waxed fat and kicked, Sec. then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation; they were gone off from God in love and esteem.* So also God is said to be forgotten, when we go off from him, as in love and esteem, so in trust and dependance, *Isa. 51. 12, 13. I, even I am he that comforteth you, who art thou that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass? and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, who hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth?*

3. *Remembering God*; includeth an actual, practical acknowledgement of him, in respect of service and obedience to him, *Deut. 8. 11. Beware that thou forgettest not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgements, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: to forget God, is to disobey God, or not to do the will of God: it is said of Israel, Judg. 3. 7. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God. So Jer. 3. 21. They have perverted their way, and have forgotten the Lord their God. Ezek. 22. 12. In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood, thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbour by extortion, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord God. So wicked men in general that disobey God, and walk not according to his will, and rule, and command, are said to forget God, *Psal. 9. 17. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. Job 8. 13. So are the paths of all that forget God, and the**

the hypocrites hope shall perish. To remember God then is to obey him, and do his will, as God is said to forget us when he doeth not our will, attends not our desires, our prayers, Isa. 49. 14. But Sion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me: so we do indeed forget God, when we do not his will, answer not his desires and commands. And as God is said to remember us, when he doeth according to what we would; when he hearkens to us, Gen. 30. 22. And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb: So we remember God, when we do according to what he would, when we hearken unto him. We then truly remember him, when we actually and practically acknowledge him in respect of service and obedience.

20. And lastly, (not to multiply particulars) the remembering God, comprehends a thankful acknowledgement of, and ascribing to him. You may see what is spoken as to this, Deut. 8. 10, and the following Verses: When thou hast eaten, and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God, for the good land which he hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God—lest when thou hast eaten, and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied, then thine heart be lifted, and thou forget the Lord thy God—and thou say in thine heart, My power, and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth: But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth. So Deut. 6. 10, &c. God is in like manner cautioning of them thankfully to remember him, and to take heed of self-ascribing: See Judg. 8. 34. Psal. 78. 35. Rom. 1. 21. Not thankfully to acknowledge and ascribe unto God, is to forget him, not to remember him; remembering him, implies thankful acknowledgement of, and ascribing to him. To Remember God, is hence to convert and turn unto him, Know and own him. To see him up, delight, rest in, and trust and depend upon him, To serve and obey him; Thankfully to acknowledge and ascribe unto him. This, and whatsoever else of knowledge, acknowledgement, esteem, homage, love, delight, trust, dependance, service, obedience, thankfulness, and ascribing, is due from the Creature to the Creator, is implied and wherupon up in this, Remember thy Creator: We may say of this, as the Apostle, 1 Rom. 13. 8. 9. He that loveth another, hath fulfilled the Law's sum: Thou shalt not commit Adultery, Thou shalt not Kill; Thou shalt not Steal; Thou shalt not bear false witness; Thou shalt not Covet: and if there be any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self: So, He that remembers God fulfils the Law, discharge the duty of a Creature to his Creator: for this, Thou shalt

Thou shalt know him, Thou shalt own him, Thou shalt love him, Thou shalt trust in him, Thou shalt serve him, Thou shalt ascribe unto him: or if there be any other Commandment, if there be ought else that is matter of duty from man to his Maker, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, *Remember thy Creator*. Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum; That to remember God, is really, heartily, affectionately, practically to own and agnize God for God, and to honour and glorify him as God; and this is to be indeed godly, to be really religious, Religion being nothing else but a Doctrine of remembering God, knowing and owning God. But so much what this *Remembering God* is importing.

II. The second thing to be spoken to is, the *Reasons* and *Grounds* of our so doing, which the very term of *Creator* is implying. It is not unusual in Scripture for men bespeaking God in Prayer and Thanksgiving, to present God under such suitable Notions, such Titles and Attributes, as may most fitly set him forth as the Author and Bestower of the desired or obtained good, as you may see *Gen.* 43. 14. *Jer.* 14. 8. *Psal.* 28. 1. & 244. 2. 2. so God speaking to us, and requiring duty from us, is clothed with such Considerations, presented under such Notions and Titles as may carry with them the ground and reason of, and motive to the duty called for, as in *Isa.* 8. 13, 14. *Jer.* 5. 22. and elsewhere. So here, there is Reason, Ground, Motive enough, in the Notion and Title of our *Creator* that God is set forth by, to put us upon the duty required, the remembering of him: *O come* (say they, *Psal.* 95. 6.) *let us worship and bow down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker*. And this is their Motive, *Psal.* 100. 1, 2, 3. *Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands: serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God, it is he that hath made us, and not we our selves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. At that day* (saith the Prophet, *Isa.* 17. 7) *a man shall look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel*. To whom should the Creature have a respectful eye, whither should he look, but to his Maker? whom should man remember, but his Creator? But that we may more fully see this, we must know, that the term of *Creator* here used, sets forth God as the *Author* of our Being, out of nothing, so of all our Being and well being, our bringing into Being, our continuance in Being, our preservation, our well-being; all the administrations of God about us as to this, are wrapped up in his being set forth as our *Creator*; nor only so, but consequently, the Right that he hath in us, the Regiment and Dominion that he hath over us, and the Disposal that he hath of us, are here included.

cluded. These things considered, *why we should Remember our Creator*, is most evident, and the Reason runneth very strong. But to touch some things.

1. Because God being our Creator, the Author and Fountain of our Being, is the End of our Being: the *first Cause* must needs be the *last End*; he that made all of himself, made all for himself, *Prov. 16. 4. The Lord made all things for himself: Rom. 11. 36. For of him, and through him, and to him are all things*: Of whom, and through whom are all things, to him are all things; he that primarily made all things of himself, made all things ultimately for himself.

2. Because God is not onely bringing us into, but continuing us in Being, preserving, and administering to our well-being: we must all of us bespeak God in *Job's* language, *Job 10. 12. Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit*, i.e. Being and well-being, and continuation of both: He is styled, *The preserver of men*, *Job 7. 20. He holdeth our soul in life*, *Psal. 66. 9. In him we live, and move, and have our being*, *Acts 17. 18. He maintaineth, and bloweth up the spark of his own kindling; He giveth to us life, and breath, and all things*, *ver. 25. of the same Chapter*: It is from his careful Providence, that is continually exercised about us, that such frail needy creatures are supported and supplied, having a subsistence, and a comfortable one. God is not like the Carpenter or Mason, that buildeth the House, and then leaveth it to it self, or the care of others, but he keepeth up what he setteth up: we should quickly lose all, and sink into our nothing again, did not the same hand that brought us out of nothing, keep us where we are. And to whom then do we owe our service? whose are we? whom should we remember? to whom should we be, but his, to him, from whom we have our maintenance and preservation, who is not our Maker onely, but our continual Upholder, and most bountifull Benefactor?

3. Because God being our Creator, is our Proprietor, Possessor, Owner, Lord, Governour. As the Lord builds the house, and keepeth it in repair, so he holdeth it himself; as he built it for himself, so he continueth to be the Proprietor, Owner, Lord, Governour, Possessor of it; as he putteth not man out of his own hands in respect of preservation, so neither in respect of possession and dominion, *Isa. 43. 1. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and that formed thee, O Israel—thou art mine. To whom God saith, I have created, I have formed thee, he saith also, Thou art mine. It is most probable indeed that the Prophet here speaks rather of spiritual then natural formation, of Gods making them in Grace then in Nature, but the reason holdeth the same and alike*

good in both. God is said to possess us upon a Creating account: his forming is praised his possessing of us. *Psal. 139. 13. Thou hast possessed my reins, thou hast covered me in my Mothers womb;* so he possesseth us upon a Creation account: as he possesseth us in making, so he possesseth us having made us. God then challengeth us, and layeth claim to us in the most *Absolute Right*, for it is beyond us to imagine, nor indeed can there be a more full and undoubted Right and Title, then Creation giveth; he being our Creator then, is in the most unquestionable Right our Possessor, Proprietor, Lord, Owner, Disposer, and we are his possession, for his use, at his dispose, bound thereunto in the highest and most unquestionable Right. — More might be added, from the knowledge God hath of us, as being our Maker, and intimately acquainted with us; *He that made man, knoweth what is in man;* he that formed the brains foundeth it, *John 2. 25. Psal. 33. 15. Heb. 4. 13. Acts 15. 18. Psal. 139. 1,* and the following Verses: and from the power that he hath over us, being easily able to reach us, and punish us at pleasure, for all our forgetfulness of him, and neglects of duty towards himself, the same hand that made can break us, he that built can easily pull us down, *2 Kings 5. 7. Job 10. 8. Psal. 104. 29. 30.* but I may not further amplify these things. Let what hath been said suffice, as to the *Grounds and Reasons* of the Duty, which the term of *Creator* is implying.

III. The third and last thing to be spoken to, for the clearing up of the Doctrine is, *Why the youngest may not put it off, but they are now to remember their Creator, now in the dayes of their youth.* We shall fetch the Reasons of this also out of the Text it self, and they are (but to name them as it were)

1. Because, young men now in the dayes of their youth, owe their Creator this present debt of remembrance; this debt of duty and acknowledgement, is due from man to his Maker, as (and as soon as) years of discretion render him capable of it: This debt doth not come to be due in Sicknes, or Death, or in old Age, but it groweth upon us with our capacity, from our very Cradles, it is from first to last Gods due, and our duty according to our capability, it is as well our duty that we remember him in our youth, as in our age, it is as well his due, that we remember him now as hereafter; every man is deeply obliged (as you may see from the grounds before given) to remember his Creator, and young men will find, if they examine them, that those reasons lye as hard upon them as the gray-headed; *Is God the God of the Jews only? saith the Apostle, is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also. Is God the Creator, Preserver, Proprietor of the old man only? is he not also of the*

the young man? yes, of the young man also. Every man is indispensably, presently bound, it is the young mans *now* duty, it is Gods *now* due.

2. Because as it is young mens *now* duty, Gods *now* due, that they remember him, so God calleth for it *now*, it is Gods due from young men that they remember him *now* in the *dayes* of their youth, and God gives no day for payment, he requireth it out of hand of the Youngest. Look through the Scriptures and you will finde (I may not stay to instance in particular) all the commands of God respecting turning from sin and vanity, and the neglect of him, and turning to, remembering, and acknowledging of him, to lye upon you in the *present tense*, as what is to be now, instantly, presently, and without delay attended.

3. As it is young mens *now* duty, Gods *now* due, that they remember him, and God now calleth for his due; so now is the fittest time of payment. It is Gods *now* due, and God requireth it *now*, and such may best do it, and discharge it *now*, in the dayes of youth; there is no such season as this *now*, these dayes of youth are affording; this reason you have expressed in the text, and prosecuted in the following verses, *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; &c.* I do but merely touch these things here, because as time will give leave, we shall have occasion to improve them further in the Application of the Doctrine, which we now come to. And the Uses we shall make of it are; onely these two; (1.) For Conviction and Reprehension, (2.) For Exhortation.

Use 1. is for Conviction and Reprehension of mens forgetting God, mens forgetfulness of God. Is it every mans duty, every young mans duty (as you have heard) *now* in the dayes of his youth to remember his Creator? How is it God is so forgotten as he is? Men forget him in their youth, and remember him not in their Age; of young and old it may be complained as of Israel, Hof. 8. 14. *Israel hath forgotten his Maker.* The charge, Ezek. 23: 35. *Thou hast forgotten me, and cast me behinde thy back,* may be sadly applied to persons of every estate and condition. God for the most part is so gotten, he is thrown by in the world, by all sorts and ranks of men; the *Wanities* of the world take up the mistles of the younger sort, and the *Cares* of it drink up the spirits of the elder. *When shall we be merry?* say young men; and *how shall we be rich?* say old men: but none saith, *where is God my Maker?* as it is complained, Job 30. 10. If men may but have their Profits, and their Pleasures, and the world go well with them, God may go where he will, for any thing that

that they regard him. Whoso looks upon the present Generation amongst our selves, and here, and there, and every-where, and sees how little God is minded by men that are well and warm in the world, will finde reason to revive that old complaint, *Hof. 13. 6.* According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted: therefore have they forgotten me. In Sicknes perhaps, at the gates of Death, under some sore Affliction, it may be said of them, as of those *Psal. 78. 34, 35.* When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned and enquired early after God: and they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer. But take men in their ruff and jollity, and pride, and plenty, and self-sufficiency, and most true is that of the Psalmist, *Psal. 10. 4.* The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not seek after God; God is not in all his thoughts. A day of Sicknes, of distress, of want, may bring them to some remembrance of God; but let them shake off their fears and sorrows, recover their health, repossess a full estate, and how soon are they in their tune, *Jer. 2. 31.* We are lords, we will come no more unto thee? O sad world! O sad world! how do men having the world, live without God in the world? live on Earth, as if there were no God in Heaven, either in regard of any need they have of him, or duty that they owe him. O how much is God forgotten in the world! how little is he remembered amongst men! and that man should not remember, but forget his Maker, what strange impiety, what provoking sin is it! One would think that whatsoever men forget, or were unmindful about, it should be rather of any thing, rather of every thing, then his Creator, the God that made him, the God that is (as you have heard) the Author and End of his Being, that is his Upholder, Preserver, and gracious visitant every moment; that is his Proprietor, Owner, Possessor, Lord, Governour, that challengeth him in the most Absolute and unquestionable Right; that is thoroughly acquainted with him, and as thoroughly able to reach and punish him for all his neglects of duty towards himself: yet alas, what doth many a man less remember, more forget then his Maker? At that day (saith the Prophet in the place before-mentioned, *Isa. 17. 7.*) Shall a man look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the holy One of Israel: but at this day the contrary in sad experience is to be seen, and said of most men. They look not to their Maker, and their eyes have no respect to the holy One of Israel. Oh how little God-ward, their Maker-ward, do most men look? how little respect have they for him? they have enough, and more then enough for the Creature, but they have little or none for the Creator. Alas, how do men gad up and down the world, setting their eyes upon

things

things that are not, scrabbling here as if the dust of the earth would not suffice for every man a handful, but thoughtless of God, and forgetting their resting-place? Oh! to look with an awakened understanding upon rational Creatures, men of Gods own making, and made for, and made able and meet for this end and purpose, to remember, know, acknowledge, own him their Creator, and then consider how little they do it, how mindless, regardless, forgetful of God they are, How astonishing is it, and yet alas how common! O it is a strange sinful doleful world, wherein it is so rare to finde a man seriously mindful of his Maker: Alas Sirs, men mindless of God, are mindless too what it is to be mindless of him; but to an enlightened, to an awakened minde, what doth a sinful, thoughtless, God-forgetting world like, but a meer *Bedlam*—

But in the further prosecuting, and more distinct handling of this Use, we shall attend these two things: (1.) We shall shew you *what this sin is*: (2.) *What a sin it is*. We shall first shew you *what this sin is*, letting it before you in the *Evidence of it*, that the guilty may know they are guilty. And then nextly we shall set it before you in the *Aggravations of it*, that the known guilty may know how guilty they are.

I. Our first work then is, to set before you this sin in the *Evidence of it*, to shew you *what this sin is*, thereby endeavouring to convince men of it (what, how fearful a sin it is for man to forget his Maker, for the creature not to remember his Creator, we have next to shew you) The present enquiry is, *whether you are not guilty? whether you are not of the number of those that so do?* And here for a more full discovery, and the bringing home the guiltiness of God-forgetting sinners to themselves, with greater Evidence and more full Conviction, We will say something (1.) *As to the Matter of it*: (2.) *As to the Manner of it*: and in both endeavour to make it undeniably apparent to the guilty, that they forget God.

First, *As to the Matter of it*. Forgetfulness of God is threefold:

1. *A forgetting that there is a God*, not that the being of God is wholly raised out of the mindes of men, and utterly lost as to any remembrance of him, but a mindlessness, thoughtlessness of him, as we are said to forget that which we do not think of, that which we do not minde, and they may well be said to forget God that minde him not, that think not of him, that are not frequently thinking of, and realizing the Being of a God to themselves: and how many a one is there that is thus forgetting God, of whom it may be said as of the wicked, *Psal. 10. 4. God is not in all his thoughts*. There is here and there a flat Atheist in the world, that denies the Being of a God, but there are too many that do not deny, yet forget

forget, that there is a God, that think lightly and seldomely of him. Our mens mindes are strangers to the serious thoughts, to the reall and awakened apprehensions that there is a God. And to think of God, of the Being of a God slightly, seldomely, now and then by the by, is to forget him. O Sirs, do you not desperately forget your Creator? may you not be called and construed (and that truly) *Forgetters of God*, when the reality, the indeedness, awfulness of his Being, is the least thing thought of or minded? when the Creature swallows all, the Creator hath not one thought of a hundred, a thousand it may be.

2. *A forgetting who, and what manner of God he is.* As they may truly be said to forget God, that remember not that God is, so they that remember not, that forget who and what manner of God he is, this (as well it may) is called and accounted a forgetting God, as you may see *Psalm 50 21, 22* Verses compared; *These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thy self: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this ye that forget God.* And how thus forgetful of God are men, they think but slightly, but too seldomely, that there is a God, but they are much more thoughtless, who and what manner of God he is; men much forget that God is, but much more who and what God he is. The Being of a God as slightly passeth the mindes of most men, as his Name doth their mouthes; but to the serious thoughts, the indeed remembrance of who and what manner of one he is, they are altogether strangers; the serious thoughts, the heart-afflicting remembrance of his Greatness, Power, Glory, Holiness, Goodness, Mercy, Loving kindness, of his Omnipresence, Omniscience, Omnipotency, Justice, Dreadfulness, is not with men. The Notion of a God, *That there is a God*, may pass mens thoughts sometimes, but O it is a God of Clouds, in comparison of what God is, that possesseth the mindes of the most men. Consider now then, dost thou not thus forget God? some slight thoughts that there is a God, it may be, sometimes come across thee, but the serious thoughts who and what he is, the great and dreadful God, and thy Maker, do not possess and abide with thee, and wilt thou call this to *Remember God*? 'tis to forget him, thou dost not remember, thou forgettest him, nay thou forgettest him while thou rememberest him, not remembering him as he is, and who and what manner of God he is, in thy remembering of him.

3. *A forgetting what God requires, our duty towards him, and the due acknowledgements which we owe him.* Man then forgets his God, when he doth not remember to discharge the duty of a creature to his Creator, when

when he doth not convert, turn to, set up, glorifie and acknowledge, love, fear, serve, obey, trust in, depend upon, and ascribe unto his God, the neglect of any of this, or ought else (not to insist upon particulars) that is matter of duty from man to his Maker (all which the *remembering God* implies, as we have before told you in the Explication of the Doctrin) is to forget him. Every impenitent unconverted sinner, that is not truly and unfeignedly turning unto God, is forgetting of him. Every hypocritical Professor, that hath a *form of godliness*, but denies the power of it; that saith, Lord, Lord, but doth not own the Lord for God, nor set him up as God, delighting, resting in him, relying, depending upon him, is forgetting of him. Every ungodly liver, that cries it may be with *Israel*, *My God, I know thee*, but casteth off the thing that is good; that professeth to own God, but shaketh off the yoke of obedience, gives him not that practical acknowledgement of service and subjection, is forgetting of him. Every unthankful wretch, that is not acknowledging and ascribing unto God as his great Benefactor, but (while his lips (it may be) complement God in his formal prayers with a *Lord I thank thee*) *Sacrifices to him not*, and saith in his heart, *My power, and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth*, is forgetting of him. To conclude, every one that is not owning God as God, the Lord for God, his Maker for his God, and Lord, and Governour, not profess dly onely, but really, affectionately, practically so acknowledging of him, is forgetting of him. And now Sirs, I beseech you to look into your own hearts and lives, is this to forget God? do not you forget him? *Be not deceived, God is not mocked*; there are too many such as the Prophet speaks of, *Jer. 12. 2. Thou art near in their mouths, and far from their reins*: O there are many that have God in their mouths, that are casting the remembrance of him out of their hearts and lives, as undoubtedly all do, who *know God*, but *glorifie him not as God*, as verily all do that *honour God with their lips*, but set up, esteem, set by, and serve the creature more then the Creator, as certainly all do, who *wish their mouths shew much love*, and yet indeed are *lovers of pleasures more then lovers of God*, as without all contradiction all such do, as *profess to know God*, but in *works deny him*, being *abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate*. Surely, if all must go for *forgetters of God*, (as undoubtedly all now, their profession to the contrary notwithstanding) that forget what God requires, that practically disacknowledge and disown him, the number of those that *remember him* will be found very small. Men much forget that there is a God, are little in serious thinking, and realizing his Being to themselves; men more forget who and what manner of God he is, are less in drinking

drinking in, digesting, and applying to themselves the consideration of it; their mindes are not possessed, seized, seasoned with it, but men most forget what God requires, are least of all in the real practical remembrance of him, as is lamentably evident in the lives of men: and if the case stand thus, O consider every one, Art thou one of that small number (a small number they are) that do indeed remember God? is thine one of those few Names, or art thou not adding one sad careless sinner more, to the multitude of those that forget him — But

Secondly, *As to the manner of it*: there is also a threefold forgetting, or not remembering God.

1. *A forgetfulness arising from the weakness of our Natural abilities*, (not as naturally, but as enfeebled by the corruption of Nature which is in all) when though we are careful, yet we cannot remember God, such a forgetfulness there is even in the best of Gods own, such as most remember him, they do not think of him, acknowledge him, glorifie, serve, obey, ascribe unto him, as they should and as they would, it is of *weakness*, it is *afflicting*, it is what they bear as their burthen, that they no more seriously remember that God is, what manner of God he is, those sure acknowledgements that they owe him, that they no more remember to know him, no more remember to love him, no more remember to desire him, no more remember to delight in him, to depend upon, to live to, to walk with him; that God is no more in all their thoughts, no more alwayes before their eyes, no more in their affections, no more actually, practically remembered by them in the whole frame of their conversations, in the whole course of their lives: they can truly say, *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*; that *to will is present, though how to perform they finde not*; they would, they are careful, take pains, strive, labour, pray, but alas they cannot remember him as they would. This, though it be such a *forgetting God* as we have cause to groan under, and say of it as the Psalmist, *This is my infirmity*; yet such though they forget God more then they would, more then they should, yet do they remember him; and are said upon the account of gracious acceptance of what they do and desire to do, to *remember him*. But there are two other sorts of *forgetting God*, which who so do, may be truly and with a witness said to forget him: and they are (1.) *A careless forgetfulness of God*. (2.) *A careless, a studied and afflicted forgetfulness of God*.

1. *A careless forgetfulness of God*, when men are careless, take no heed to remember him, but lightly, negligently pass over the *remembering God* as a matter not to be minded, and alas, how common is this? how many

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ny are there that cannot here wash their hands, but have a Conscience within telling them, that it is not of weakness because they cannot remember God no more, but of *wilful carelessness* that they take no heed to remember, that they do so much forget him. O is not this the true, but sad case of many of you, that you can bring forth and bend your abilities upon other accounts, you can take pains to minde the Creature, the World, your business, your occasions, your pleasures, your vanities, but the *remembering God* easily slips from you as a slighted thing; men have memory for any thing, every trifle and gewgaw can be thought upon, but *God is forgotten* from mens meer slighthness and mindlessness of remembering him. May not God bespeak many of you (of the younger sort more especially) as he doth his people, *Ier. 2. 32. Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number. Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? no, she will not easily forget these; yet my people have forgotten me days without number: q.d.* A maid will much more set by her rich Apparel, then my people do my me; or, I am not so much to them as fine clothes, or their vanity, their bravery, their ornaments, their attire, these are things thought upon, these stick in their mindes, they want no memory for these, they think and think of these, but I am lightly and long forgotten. O Sirs, is not this true of some of you? let Conscience speak, your own hearts be judge between you and *the Searcher of hearts*; whether a fashionable Suit, a gay Coat hath not been more to you than God? whether you have not more given your mindes, devoted your selves to your Toyes and Trinkets, and unnecessary Curiosities, then your Maker? Must not many a Young man, many a Maid in this Assembly say, if they will speak truth, I never gave my minde so to think of God, or have ever been so thoughtful about *remembering my Creator*, as about my new Clothes, my Hoods and Scarfs, and superfluous Bravery; these I have been giving my minde to, but I have been meerly careless, and taken no heed to remember that God that made me: and sure such may be said to *forget God*, who prefer every vanity in their hearts and thoughts before him, who minde not to be mindful of him, who have mindes for other things, but none for God, the remembering him is meerly slighted, let pass, let slip, as a matter of no moment, of no worth, weight or concernment.

2. There is as a careless, so a carefull, a studied and affected forgetfulness of God; which you would do well to think whether you are not also guilty of: you take not pains, do not give your mindes to remember God, nay do not you take some Paines, give your mindes to forget him?

A Young Mans Legacy

Have you not been shifting off, and out of minde the thoughts of God; that he is, what manner of God he is, what he requires, the duty that is due, and that acknowledgement that belongs to him from you, when God in Ordinances hath been coming in upon your Spirits, minding you of himself, and your duty to him; or when in solemn and awakening Providences, he hath been drawing near you with the remembrance of his being your Maker, the God in whose hands your breath is, and whose are all your wayes, and whom you ought to glorifie, have you not been as it were saying to him, *Depart from us, we desire not the remembrance of thee, nor of our duty towards thee.* In a word, as it is said of those, *Rom. 1. 28. that they did not like to retain God in their knowledge,* may it not be said of you, You do not like to remember God, to retaine the remembrance of him. It is said of the wicked, *Psalm. 10 4. God is not in all his thoughts;* or as your margent hath it, *All his thoughts are there is no God (i.e. as some carry the sence of it) he puts God out of his thoughts* all he may; he doth not like to retaine God in his thoughts, in his remembrance; Art thou such a one that dost not like to retain God in thy knowledge, the remembrance of him that he is, who and what manner of one he is, what he requires, thy duty towards him, but art suppressing and shifting off such unwelcome thoughts & take it home to thee, thou art not only a careless, but a wilful, carefull forgetter of God. It is a very lamentable thing to see men take no thought to remember God, but slightly pass it over as a thing not to be minded; but, O how unexpressibly dreadfull is not only the careless, but the carefull, studied, affected forgetfulness of God, when men not carelessly onely, but carefully cast off the remembrance of their Maker. But of this we have next to speak — Having thus set before you this sin in the Evidence of it, what this sin is, that the guilty may know they are guilty, I proceed,

2. To set it before you in the Aggravations of it, what a sin it is, that the known guilty may know how guilty they are. Certainly forgetfulness of God, howsoever it may seem no great matter, and the commonness of it may cause men to be the less affected with it, hath more in it then slight inconsiderate spirits are aware of. There is a strange kinde of proneness in men to imagine, if they are not given over to an excess of riot; if they are not given up to these and those sins, which the world calls *Scandalous*, that their estates are good, or at least tolerable, though they never seriously apply themselves to remember God their Creator, but forget practically, disown and disacknowledge him all their dayes. Thou art pleasing and flattering thy self, it may be, I am not as many other men, I live in no gross sin, I am no Adulterer, Fornicator, Drunkard, Thief,

Thief, unjust dealer, &c. Alas man, is it a light thing, must it now go for no gross sin for the creature to forget his Creator, for man to disown, disacknowledge his Maker? dost thou indeed think this is no great matter? and that seeing thou art no Adulterer, Drunkard, &c. no gross sinner (as thou art pleased to call it) God may easily overlook and put it up that thou art forgetting, slighting, disacknowledging, disowning him all along. Bethink thy self, man, is it indeed nothing or next to nothing, a small matter with thee, to love and serve the creature more than the Creator, to remember too much every vanity, and forget the God that made thee? O that men were sensible, that they did but know how dreadful and provoking a thing this is, and of how dangerous consequence unto themselves! We shall say something (though we must be brief in either) both of the *greatness*, and of the *danger* of it.

First, The *greatness* of the sin of forgetting God, may appear:

1. From the deep obligation that lyes upon you to remember him as he is your Creator. Look back upon what hath been said before, and consider what obligation Gods being your Maker layes upon you to remember him; you are wholly God's in all that you are and have from first to last; you are, and have nothing, but what you are and have from him and for him. To forget, disacknowledge him therefore (being every way as deeply bound as is possible or imaginable) must needs be a great wickedness, a transcendent *Sin*. O Sirs, do but seriously consider how much you are indebted unto God for all things, and all along from your first Being untill this now, and sure it will appear a strange, horrible, unreasonable, unthankful, vile, inexcusable thing, to forget and disacknowledge him. O think, I beseech you, how can it but be a sin of the first *Magnitude* to forget, disown God, who hath not onely done so much upon a *Creation account*, but is doing so much every day upon a *Providential account*, to make himself remembred by you? sure there can be no room to think it a light thing to forget and disacknowledge God, while his daily, hourly visitations, and gracious remembrances of you, have any room in your thoughts: What, forget him that visits you every morning, and minds you every moment! We have the Psalmist in a rapture of holy admiration, *Psal. 8. 4.* *What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?* That God should be mindful of man; so remember, visit him, what a wonder is it? That man should be mindless of God, forget, disown him, what a wonder is it? That God should be thoughtful of and about us, is a wonder of mercy and condescension; that we should be thoughtless and unmindful of God, is a wonder of unreasonable and unthankfulness; for the friend to forget his friend, any

poor indigent creature his most liberal Benefactor, for the Childe to forget and disacknowledge his Father that begat him, the Mother that brought him forth, the Parents that nourished and brought him up, is nothing to this, for the creature to forget his Maker. The bodies that you bear about you, all your bones, all the mercies you receive, all the creatures you enjoy and behold, are your daily remembrancers of God. O that you would think your lives are filled up with mercies, you are daily laden with benefits, and there is not one blessing which any of you have, but it hath from God this written upon it, *Remember me*. When God puts Bread into thy hands, he saith, *Here, eat and remember me*; when he fills thy Cup, he bids, *Remember me*; when he puts Clothes upon thy back, he saith, *Remember me*: God gives thee all, and he gives thee all to lead thee to himself, the remembrance and acknowledgement of himself. And, O man, is it nothing for all this to forget and disown God, to whom thou art so obliged and indebted? That God that hath as it were studied so many ways to fasten himself in thy remembrance, canst thou make a light matter of it, or how canst thou look upon it otherwise then an intolerable inexcusable evil, to sin against such merciful multiplied, and obliged remembrances of him? How canst thou but say, *How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?* O how wilt thou ever be able to hold up thy head, that God that thus deeply and dearly deserved to be remembered by thee, shall question thee for thy forgetfulness of him? wilt thou then be able thinkest thou, to make as light a matter of it as thou now dost, when he himself shall reason out the case with thee, when he shall say, *Did I indeed make and maintain thee? did I house, and lodge, and feed, and clothe, and deliver thee? did I visit thee every morning, and take care of thee every moment, and all to forget me?* Sinner, God-forgetting sinner, can thy heart endure, or can thy hands be strong in the day that God shall thus deal with thee? Now consider this ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.

2. (See I must but name things) This forgetting God must needs be a light sin, nor a little provoking, having in it, carrying with it, arguing, and too evidently holding forth much contempt, a low and light esteem of him. That which a man esteems he keeps in memory, he treasures it up there, is mindful, thoughtful of and about it: remembrance and esteem run together, as you may see in that of the Psalmist, *Psal. 137. 5, 6. If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth: why, whence was this?* you may see in the next words, *If I prefer not Jerusalem*

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Jerusalem above my chief joy. But to forget argues a light esteem, *Jer.* 30 14 *All thy lovers have forgotten thee, they seek thee not: q.d.* Time was they doct upon thee, but now they care not for thee, they come not at thee: a mans minutulness of any person or thing, thoughtfulness about it, argues it to be of some account with him; but when a man forgets a thing, especially when he carelessly, purposely, wilfully forgets it, it evidently shews that he slights and contemns it: To forget God then is highly to contemn him, manifestly to despise him; and is it a light thing to let light by God? is it a contemptible matter, to contemn him? O man, who is God thy Maker, thy Creator, that he should be thus slighted and contemned by thee, as if he were not to be regarded, not worth the minding? and who art thou, His own Creature, made by him, and made to glorify him, that thou shouldst thus contemn him? O that thou wouldst but think what it is for a little piece of breathing creeping Clay, formed and moulded, and animated and quickned, and kept alive by God himself, to do him such indignity, and cast such contempt upon him as to forget him.—— But

3. Consider, this cannot but be a great and provoking sin, not onely from the contempt it calls upon God, but also from the extreme unreasonable wrong and injury that is thereby done unto him. God made all things for himself, is the Owner, Proprietor of them, and in the highest and most unquestionable Right is challenging them for himself, his own glory; and what more unreasonable then to deny it him? what more injurious then to frustrate his end as much as lyes in you? The whole Creation, all the rest of the inferiour Creatures, have a mediate reference unto the glory of God by and through man; man by forgetting God breaks the last link of the Chain, and unloosens the whole frame. It is you Sirs, you that forget and disacknowledge God, that stand between him and his glory and service which he should have, as from your selves, so from all the rest of the works of his hands; when the motion of the Creature God-wards, Gods glory-ward, comes to you, you stop it, divert it, give check to it. I beseech you Sirs seriously think, what doth that man do, and what doth that man deserve, that doth what in him lyes to destroy and undo all that God hath done, to render the World useless, and this glorious Frame of Beings good for just nothing. Art thou a forgetter of God? thou art the man that art doing what in thee lyes to be frustrating God of his end, and abridging him of his glory in all.

4. The greatness of this sin further appears, in that it is not onely a contemning, vilifying, injuring, robbing God, but it is a kind of nullifying

and un-Godding of him, a making him no God, so far forth as any forget and disown God, so far forth they un-Be, nullifie, un-God him to themselves, which is as far as they can go to un-Be, to un-God him in himself, from whom, in whom all live, and move, and have their being, is a high impossibility, infinitely beyond all created power which he himself hath made: it is not the fools saying in his heart, *There is no God*, and in his life, *There shall be none*, will make none; the Atheist cannot think him out of Being, but men go as far as they can this way, while they forget and disacknowledge him, making him no God unto themselves: you cannot dethrone him from his glory, or dispossess him of his *Eternal Power and Godhead*, but you may, yea such as forget and disacknowledge God, do nullifie and un-God him to themselves, say he shall be no God to them, which is as much as they can do, men can bid no higher, reach no further, then by forgetting him to say, *There is no God*, and by disacknowledging him to say, *He shall be no God to us*. Thou that forgettest God, think of this, the heart of God thou canst not reach, thy arm is too short to take his Crown from his Head; but, O Traytor, Rebel, unthankful wretch as thou art, thou art doing what thou canst do un-God God, un-Be thy Maker, to nullifie him who hath granted thee life and favour, and whose visitations sustain thy spirit. Thus dost thou requirer the Lord who is thy Father, (thy Creator) who hath made thee and established thee. But

5. The greatness of *thou sin* is yet more evident, in that it is a *Mother-sin*, the Root and Cause, and Fountain and Original of all other sins. In it is all sins are virtually, eminently, radically contained, the forgetting God (as we have before described it, forgetting that there is a God, who and what manner of God he is, what he requires, the duty and acknowledgement that we owe him) is productive of any, of every sin. From hence are those multiplied wickednesses and enormities that the lives of men are full of. See what is said, *Psal. 50. 18, 19, 20. When thou sawest a Thief, when thou consentedst to him, and hast been partakers with the Adulterers: thou gawest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit; thou sittest and speakest against thy brother, and slanderest thine own Mothers son*. What is the reason of this? why, as it follows in the next words, *These things hast thou done and I kept silence, thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thy self*. O did not men forget that God is, as to any serious thoughts of his Being; so, who and what God is, and what duty and acknowledgement they owe him, men would not, durst not Whore, and Steal, and Slander, and Lie, &c. We have (not to stand upon it) the Scripture frequently giving in this as the reason of the vileness, unreasonableness

reasonable of men, their forgetting, their not remembring God, Psal. 147. Ezek. 22. 12. Hos. 8. 14. Psal. 54. 31, &c. *The feare of the Lord* (as the Wise-man speaks, *Prov. 6. 10.*) is the beginning of wisdom; the knowledge, fear, the remembrance and acknowledgement of God, is the fountain and well-head of Piety and Religion, the beginning and maintainer of all holiness and honesty of heart and life, and it is forgetfulness of God that is the root of all prophaneſs, dishonesty, wickedness. Men are prone to flatter themselves (as was before intimated) that they are not gross sinners, and men are apt to promise themselves that they will not be such, though they do not apply themselves to the indeed remembring God, but believe it, Sirs, that man doth not know whither he shall be left, or what wickedness he shall be given up to, (whatsoever he may hope, or think, or perswade himself) that sets not himselfe to the indeed remembring and acknowledging God, alas, how many such have been sadly left, that as little thought it by themselves as any of you can do, who had they been foretold what they should be and do, would have answered with *Hazael*, *Am I a dog, that I should do such great things?* flatter not thy self man, If thou wilt not remember God indeed, be thoroughly godly, be good in good earnest, thou canst not tell how bad, how vile and wicked thou shalt be.

6. And lastly, there is yet this more, manifesting the exceeding greatness of this sin, that it is against the light and law of nature it self. Such as forget and disacknowledge God sin against their very Reason it self, against their certain knowledge, against the clearest light, and strongest conviction of a naturall Conscience. That there is a God that made us, and we ought to remember him, that there is of duty and acknowledgement due to him, is a truth generally, deeply, and indelibly engraven upon the hearts of all: whosoever he be therefore, whosoever thou art that forgettest and disacknowledgest God, thou art convicted by thy own Conscience, thou art condemned by thine own heart, thou art going against the shining light and strongest evidences of thy own reason; and sure when God shall Judge thee according to the Law of the remembrance of him written in thy heart, thy sin will be found to be so much the more sinfull, hateful, inexcusable, by how much thou hast gone against the very light of Nature, thy own certain knowledge, and reason it self. But so much of the greatness of this sin.

Secondly, A few words of the danger of it. Possibly some that are little or nothing affected with the greatness of this sin in it self, may be somewhat awakened with the consideration of the danger of it to themselves. Consider then

1. The forgetting and disowning God will provoke him to forget & disown you, *2 Chron. 15. 2. The Lord is with you while ye be with him, and if ye seek him he will be found of you, but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.* Remember God, and he will remember you; own him, and he will own you: but disacknowledge him, and he will disacknowledge you. Relations are mutual, and the due of Relates each to other, is reciprocal; if thou dost not remember and own him as thy Creator, he will not remember and own thee as his Creature, and what can be worse then this? See what God threatneth, *Jer. 23. 39. Behold, I even I will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you:* and it is spoken of, as you may see by the Context, as the forest doom, the heaviest burthen that can be laid upon the back of a poor creature. Forget God, and it will come to that which the Prophet speaks of, *Isa. 27. 11. He that made them will have no mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour.* It is an Argument much made use of in Scripture, moving the Lord to remember us in mercy, moving him to compassion towards us, to tell him that *we are his creatures, that he is our Maker, and we are the work of his hands,* Job 10. 3. 9. *Psal. 118. 8. Isa. 64. 8.* but not to own him as such, invalidates this Argument, such forfeit the favour and merciful regard of the God that made them: and if this be the doleful condition of such as do not remember him, that *he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour,* it is high time for every one to look about him. A day may come man (dost not thou think so?) when thou wilt be glad to plead the Priviledge of a poor Creature with the God that made thee, but will not God stop thy mouth with thy *not remembering thy Creator?* Dost thou not know (or dost thou think thou shalt never know) what it is in a day of extremity to have no where else to fly, but to the mercy of the God that made thee, to the favour and pity of the God that formed thee, and to have this way blockt, to have God shake thee off, and forget and disown thee (as thou hast done him) as to shewing thee any favour? Thinkest thou the time will never be (as little as thou carest for, or standest in need of God now) when thou shalt know thou standest in as much need of God, as he doth of thee? thou standest in as much need of his merciful remembrance, his beneficence, as he of thy dutiful remembrance and obedience.

2. Consider, the *not remembering*, the *forgetting God* will provoke him to blow upon, and blast you in all your Enterprizes, rendring them fruitless and unsuccessful, rendring them vain and empty and vexatious: it is Gods favour and presence that is the happiness of every condition, that sweetens all our enjoyments, and succeeds all our undertakings; and it is the

the absence of God, his disfavour, that makes all but a meer heap of vanity and vexation, and such as forget God (though the world smile upon them for the present) shall at last finde this so to their sorrow, *Isa. 17. 10, 11. Because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the Rock of thy strength, therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips: In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish; but the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief, and of desperate sorrow.* The plain meaning of it is, that howsoever those that forget God pursue the world, may go smoothly on for a while, yet vexatious disappointment will be the issue, a ruinous heap, irreparable frustration, causing grief and desperate sorrow, shall be the harvest which the flourishing seed-time of all their cunning, careful, painful, pleasing, promising projects shall afford them. You may see how the awhile flourishing, but after-withering estate of such as forget God is described, *Job 8. 11, &c.* and frequently elsewhere in Scripture. I beseech you think of it, for a time you may thrive without God in the world, the more you forget him, the more you may prosper, and the more you prosper the more you may forget him, as too many times men do; they feel the world a coming, and cool apace Godward; the world grows upon them, and God grows more and more out of remembrance with them: think, I say, whatsoever your present flourishing estate may promise you, *the harvest will be a heap in the day of grief, and desperate sorrow.*

3. Consider, the forgetting God will provoke him to bring upon you Spiritual Judgements, to give you up to *blindness of minds, hardness of hearts*, to insatiate and besot you, leave you to a seared Conscience, and a senselessness in sinning. You have, *Psal. 81.* God calling upon *Israel* (while he graciously remembers them of himself) to be owning and acknowledging of him, but they will not; and what comes of it? *ver. 11. So I gave them up to their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsils.* You may reade (and tremble to reade) what is said of them, *Rom. 1.* that when they knew God, did not glorify him as God, that did not like to retain God in their knowledge; that for this cause God gave them up to vile affliction, to a reprobate minde, to be filled with all unrighteousness, to all excess of, and besottedness in sinning. A hard heart, a reprobate minde, a seared Conscience, a being past feeling, a committing sin with greediness, are the sad effects of not remembring, of forgetting and disacknowledging God. And Oh that those of the younger sort would think of this, that blindness of minde, that hardness of heart, that spiritual stupor and benumbedness of Conscience, that greediness in sinning, that excess of riot, which many run

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unto, and which grows upon them with their years, are the sad and vindictive effects of their not remembering and turning to the Lord in their younger time.

4. And lastly Consider, God will finde a time to remember such as forget him, he will finde a time to be remembered (and sadly remembered too) by such as most slight him; God will have his glory, his acknowledgement; he will fetch it out of those that forget and disacknowledge him upon earth, in Hell, *Psal. 61 17. The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the nations that forget God*; then and there God will be righted, he will come over with thee for all thy neglect, contempt, forgetfulness of him, and casting him behinde thy back, *Prov. 16. 4. The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea even the wicked for the day of evil*; q.d. God will not lose his labour in making them neither, he will have his honour out of them too, in their perdition and destruction; as God saith of *Zidon, Ezek. 28. 22. that he will be known, glorified, sanctified in her, in the executing of Judgements*: so if now thou wilt not voluntarily remember, acknowledge, glorifie him, a day is coming when God will make thee remember, acknowledge him, serve to his glory (though little to thy benefit or comfort) whether thou wilt or no. Lay these things together then, and think, that as in nothing you so much remember your selves, your own concerns, as in remembering God, so in nothing you so much forget your selves, your own good, as in forgetting & disacknowledging him. — I have been longer upon this Use then I intended, and must necessarily be more contracted in what remains.

Use II. is for Exhortation, and earnest perswasion unto all and every one to remember his Creator, and do it now, *Remember now thy Creator, &c.* doubtless it is a duty incumbent upon all, and of every age, to be now attended by them; the notion of a Creator challenges this at every mans hand, and that presently and out of hand, be they young or be they old, have they more or have they less neglected it, it abides the now duty of every one: it is the sin of such that have forgotten God in their youth, but it is their duty to remember him in their age; hast thou forgotten God so long or so long? it lyes upon thee now to remember him. Somewhat would have been spoken more generally unto all (but time scanting upon us) we shall especially urge the Exhortation upon such as are the persons to whom the Text is directing it. And I beseech you, my Brethren of the Rising Generation, Suffer the word of Exhortation which speaketh to you, and to every one of you in particular, *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth*. It is not said, *Remember now your Creator*, or let all men remember now their Creator, but *Remember now thy*

thy Creator : that none may put it off to the general, God puts it home to each one in particular. To thee young man it is spoken, and to thee young woman ; to thee John, and to thee Thomas, to thee Mary, and to thee Sarah, the Exhortation as much, as particularly concerns thee, as if thy Name were written in the Text : and, Oh that I might be a poor Instrument in the hand of God, to bring home this word to thy heart ! Oh that I might be thy effectual Remembrancer upon the account ! Oh that I might perswade, prevalently perswade thee, *now in the dayes of thy youth to remember thy Creator !* Oh that *now* man, *now in the dayes of thy youth*, while it is yet morning with thee, thou wouldest take time at advantage, and improve this present, precious, peerless season, which will be but for a little while, in the serious applying thy self hereunto, and minding the God, and thy duty towards the God that made thee, *now while the evil dayes come not.* Remember and turn unto him *now*, for he and acknowledge, and love, and fear, and serve him *now* : Do not think there is no such haste, if any man may put it off for a while I may, there can be no great danger or damage in deferring it a little : There is such haste, no man may put it off, no not a while, neither mayest thou, the danger, the damage of deferring but a little, a week, a day, may be thy eternal undoing. O do not think it is *duty* indeed to remember God, 'tis matter of *importance*, 'tis what must be done, I will do it, I will do it more, I will be more serious in it hereafter ; but look upon it as thy *now duty*, as matter of importance and necessity to be done, and to be done to purpose, to be seriously dealt in *now* : truly *his labor*, here is the difficulty ; to perswade men that it is duty to remember God, to convince men of the necessity of it, that it must be done, is not hard, but alas to prevail with men to do it *now*, instantly, presently to attend it, here is the difficulty and impossibility with the most men ; and it is this, O it is this, the *now remembering God*, that I would fain perswade thee to. And to press home this Exhortation to a *present remembering God*, to the doing of it *now in the dayes of youth*, I might muster up a multitude of cogent Considerations, but I shall onely request you to reflect upon, and reason a little with you from the *Grounds* which we before intimated to you, why the youngest may not put it off, to be *now remembering their Creator*. Consider then

1. That thou remember thy Creator is due unto him *now*, it is his *now due*, it is thy *now duty*. Do not look upon it under the notion of *duty* onely, a thing of necessity, what must have a time to be thought on ; but be perswaded to think of, and consider it more nearly, as matter of *now duty*, that which lyes upon thee with the greatest necessity that can be,

not sometime, but *now* at this present time to be attended. Questionless that is duty, that it is of necessity, and that it shall be done, they will finde a time for it, is with most men: Sure thou art saying in thy heart (thou that at present art most remiss, negligent and forgetful of God) I will remember and turn unto the Lord sometime or other before I die: thou art intending, purposing, promising thy self, that though at present thou art too neglective, yet it shall not be alwayes thus, hereafter thou wilt be more serious, and if it be done at *any time*, it will be as well as if thou didst it *now*. Hast thou not some such reasonings of heart as these? To which I answer, That though such indeed be the bottomless Mercy of God, and the boundless Merits of the precious Blood-shed of the Lord Jesus, that upon a sound and soaking Repentance, and serious remembering of him at last, those that have long, ever so long neglected it, shall be graciously forgiven, yet it is not otherwise all one to forget, neglect God this day, week, moneth, year, though thou shouldst remember him the next. Man, it is thy duty *now*, it is Gods due *now*, thou mayest not think it is well enough, or it is all one, if thou remember and turn unto him any time hereafter; the duty of *to day* cannot be done *to morrow*, thy *now duty*, the duty of thy youth, cannot be done hereafter and in thy Age, though the neglect may be repented of and pardoned, which how seldome it is we shall hereafter shew. And besides, Oh that thou wouldst think what it is to abuse thy God, because thou hopest to finde him so exceeding gracious; what it is to neglect duty, and purpose to repent when thou hast done as a remedy, which is to make the best of thy case. O do not thus put off God, whatever thy future intendments may be, in delaying his *now due*, thou mayest not thus deal with thy fellow-creature, *Prov. 9.27. Withhold not good from them to whom it is due*; we may not defer and put off the payment of what is due to men, as the Scripture plentifully speaks, and wilt thou thus deal with God?

2. Consider, as it is thy *now duty*, Gods *now due*, that thou remember him; so God calleth for it *now*: *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?* Take the man in the Parable, *Matth. 10.15*. May not God when he will call for his own? God claims no more then his *due*, his *now due*, but this he is making present challenge of, and calling for without delay; thou canst not say but thou art his debtor, nor art thou able to make any pretence that it is not yet due, nor is there any room of an excuse for thee that it is not demanded, God makes present demand, he gives thee no time to put it off. Had God left it as a duty indifferently to be at any time done, provided it were done; had God said, See thou remember me sometime or other, it had been but wisdom for thee to do

it to day, that knowest not whether thou shalt have a *morrow* to do it in; but God calls for it now, and it is real disobedience (purpose as thou wilt for the future) not to do it now. It is ours to do as *what*, so *when* God requires, and to delay and put off when God calls, is a great degree of disobedience shouldst thou afterwards attend it. The great ones of the World, thy bigger fellow-Creatures, man, will not brook it to have their Commands trusted, their Subjects and Servants dare not do it, what they Command, and when they Command must be attended: when the King commands *Haman*, as you may reade in the story, (*Esth. 6.*) *take the Apparell, and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even to Mordecai the Jew*, though it were a matter went as much against the hair as might be, he presently attends it, as you may there see; and is it for thee lightly to put it off, when God calls, *Remember now thy Creator*. O young men, I beseech you look upon it as a dreadful, provoking, dangerous thing, to slight and put off the Commands of God when he calls for present obedience. Do not onely look upon it as a dreadful thing altogether to put off the Commands of God, but to do it at all; and O now comply with the now Call of God. O that it might be with you, as the Psalmist speaks of himself, *Psal. 27. 8. When thou saidst, Seek ye my face: my heart said unto thee, Thy face Lord will I seek.* Make God such returns, when God saith, *Remember now thy Creator*, let thy heart eccho unto the Command, and say unto him, *My Creator Lord will I remember.* I made *haste and delayed not* (saith David, *Psal. 119. 60.*) *to keep thy Commandments*: so the Call, the Command of God being upon thee, make haste and delay not to attend it.

3. And lastly, consider, as thou owest thy Creator this present debt of *Remembrance*, and he calleth for, and makes demand of it now, so now is the fittest time for payment, thou art now in the best capacity to do it, now in the dayes of thy youth, while the evil dayes come not, before those times of less advantage, of greater disadvantage overtake thee, no time to this present time, no age to the dayes of youth; thou hast now such a price in hand, as thou wilt never enjoy more; it is the argument which David by his messengers improves with *Nabal* (*1 Sam. 25. 8.*) *We come in a good day, give I pray thee, &c.* God is come unto thee in a good day, while he calls upon thee now in the dayes of thy youth, while the evil dayes come not, to remember him. O think man, will there ever be a fairer opportunity then now is, or wilt thou ever be in better capacity then thou now art, thine eyes may weep over this when lost, but will they ever see such another season as these dayes of youth are now affording thee? will thy capacity, ability be greater or better then now it is? or will thy worke be easier then

then now it is? or will thy hindrances be fewer, thy helpes and advantages more, then now they are? if not, why shouldst thou put it off, why shouldst thou not make use of this present time? Sure thou judgest it requisite, indispenfibly requisite, to remember, turn to God, seek him, serve him, and that in good earnest, thou canst not but, know it is what must be done, or thou art for ever undone; And why may not what must be done be as well done, yea better done now then put off longer. O think seriously of it, if thou ever meanest to remember God, *now* is the time, *now in the dayes of thy youth* is the fittest, fairest opportunity. And because this is an argument of weight, and such as may breake off all delayes, were it but well thought of, let me request thee a little more particularly to consider,

1. This is the best, the fittest time, because now the work will be most feizable and facile; the sooner thou settest upon the work to remember and turn unto God, the easier it will be, and the longer thou art putting off, the more difficulties and disadvantages will attend thee in it; and if this be so in a work of that necessity and importance as this is, certainly it concerns thee to look about thee presently. But this is so; for, (1.) Thy delaying, deferring, putting off, doth dispose thee more and more still to delay, defer, put off: the longer thou art putting off, the stronger will thy disposition be to be putting off still; the old Saying is full true here, *Qui non vult bodie cras minus aptus erit*, He that will not to day, shall be less fit to morrow; he that puts off now, will be more prone to put off hereafter; he that defers for the present, will do it much more for the future. Let me ask thee, (and I beseech thee seriously consider of it) Dost thou finde thy self more disposed to take the present time that now is, by all thy past puttings off? nay, dost thou not finde that the more thou delayest and puttest off, the more thou mayest, and that thou art so much the readier to do it still, by how much the longer thou hast done it already? and if this be the effect of former put off, as to the present, thou mayest easily gather what will be the fruit of present put off, as to the future. O believe it, every dayes procrastinating, every weeks, and moneths, and years proroguing and putting off, sets thee further off upon this account. Alas man, thou goest on from day to day, from one time to another, seeding thy self with future hopes, promises, purposes and intendments, while every day a greater indisposition, dilatory dangerous death-threatening temper is growing upon thee. And (2.) Consider, as thy indisposition, disaffection is strengthened by thy delaying, so every day the lets and hindrances, and blocks and difficulties in thy way are heightened. Dost thou not think thou wouldest
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finde enough to do of it now to turn over a new leaf, forget thy vanities, forsake thy sins, shake off thy loose Companions, and set thy self to a serious remembring, converting and turning to the Lord, and without custome in sin the longer thou goest on in it, render thy return still the more difficult, *Jer.* 13. 23. *Heb.* 3. 7, 8, 13. Alas, the work is difficult, the hindrances many, thy heart so averse and indisposed, that thou knowest not how to perswade and overcome thy self to set upon it presently, and yet art thou bold to delay it, presumptuously promising thy self the doing of it, when thy indisposition will be more, and the difficulties greater then now they are. Thou mayest flatter thy self while thou art putting off *now*, and putting off *then*, with the hopes of a future repentance and conversion, but certainly Satan who is labouring thy ruine, upon a more probable ground promiseth himself his prey, while putting off to deliver thy self, thou art every day more entangled in his snares, and the way of thy repentance blocked up, and rendred more difficult and unlikely every day then other. Do but seriously think of this, and sure thou wilt see little reason to be delaying and putting off any longer; thou wilt see great reason to set thy self to a present remembring thy Creator, to a now converting and turning unto God. Did thy delay advantage thee, it were somewhat; did it facilitate thy work, did it wear out the hindrances it were somewhat, nay did it not disadvantage thee it were more tolerable; but when such is the evident and apparent disadvantage of delay, O that ever thou shouldst be guilty of this manifest folly, yea madness, as to put it off still. And (3.) Consider, that as by delaying and putting off to remember thy Creator, thou art increasing thy own indisposition, and the letts and difficulties in thy way are daily heightened; so also (which is as considerable as any thing) thou art set further and further off the efficacy of helps and means hereunto conducing: thy continuing to refuse, resist, put off, hath a probable and woful tendency to take off the edge of any Convictions, Admonitions, Perswasions, and make them of no force with thee. What is the reason of (which we see in sad experience to be so) the little efficacy the Ministry of the Word hath upon the hearts of men that have lien long under it, nay the less efficacy then formerly. Time was, it may be, that an awakening Sermon would have more moved them then now it will, is it not hence, that they have so long put off the Calls of God, that they are now become powerless. I have read of a Roman Senator, with whom poison had lost its force, having by degrees long habituated himself to it, when he would have poisoned himself for the shunning of a more shameful death, he could not do it, it would not work with him: the Word of God is said to be quick and

powerful, and mighty in operation, but many a man delays and dallies with it so long, till it become to him dead, powerless, and inoperative. Oh! were this thought of, how rarely are such wrought upon to remember God in their Age, who have been called upon (as thou now art) to *Remember their Creator in the dayes of their youth*; it is rarely, very rarely found, but men born and brought up under Means, are savingly wrought upon, converted and turned to God if ever, before they pass the flower of their Age, and men brought under Means not long after they first enjoy them. The Word of God is wont early (if at all) to take indeed hold upon the Spirits of such as are born and brought up under it, and it is ordinarily made quickly (if ever) an indeed convincing, converting, saving Word to them that are brought under it: for God effectually to convert, and call home to himself in elder years, such as have not enjoyed the Means in their younger time, is more common; but to grow aged under Means, and then to be wrought upon, is a sight seldome seen. Look into the Scripture and see, if thou canst finde one Example of such a thing; look into thy own Experience and think, how many hast thou known savingly wrought upon in their old Age, in their declensions, that lived constantly under the Means of grace in their younger time. Many the sad and dreadful Examples of men grown Sermon-proof, senseless, past feeling, upon whom the Word hath no power (unless to blinde and harden them further) that being often reprov'd, perswaded, called upon, have stood out, put off, are before thee in the Bible upon record, and in present sad Experience; there are many, very many that having turned a deaf ear to the Calls of God to *Remember their Creator in the dayes of their youth*, are strangely insatuated, besotted, hardened, rendred senseless and obdurate in their Age; but there are few, very few, very very few, if any, that neglecting the Calls of God to remember him in their youth, have attended it in their old Age. Man, believe this, that as thou hast little, very little cause to hope that the Calls of God resisted, refused in thy youth, will be savingly effectual in thy Age; so thou hast much, very much cause to fear, that the Word that now avails not with thee to bring thee to a serious remembring of God, will be judicially sealing of thee up under *blindness of minde and hardness of heart*, for refusing and putting off his Call: thus it befell the *Jews* in like case, *Isa. 6.9, 10*. But I hasten.

2. Consider, *now in the dayes of thy youth* is the best, the most opportune time to *Remember thy Creator* (not onely for the facility of the work, as hath been said, but) because thou shalt be sure to finde God facile in accepting and remembring thee, now remembring and turning to him,

as God hath sadly and severely threatned such as put off his Call, put off when he calls, to remember and turn unto him, the slipping of their season, that they shall after finde the door of acceptance shut against them, *Zech. 7. 13.* and often elsewhere; so God hath graciously promised and laid forth his readines to shew mercy unto such as remember and seek him betimes: in *Prov. 8. 17.* and other places, you may see the promise of finding made over to early seeking; and to this purpose is that of the Prophet, *Isa. 55. 6. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found:* there is a season, there is a while, when God may be found, but put off a while, miss this season, and the case may be altered. You may see God at once and together (*Prov. 1. 23.* and following verses) promising as to the present, and threatning as to the future; I intreat thee to take notice of it, God calls thee, *Remember now thy Creator, &c.* and as to the present attendance of his Call, thou hast many gracious Promises; but as to the future, if thou wilt adventure to delay, dally, and put it off, the sad threatnings of a too late, look wishly upon thee. Well may I say of thy now remembering God, now in the dayes of thy youth, as the Apostle, *2 Cor. 6. 2. Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.* O now man is a time of acceptance, a salvation day; O now, now remember and turn unto the Lord. without any more delay or longer putting off; set thy self seriously to seek and acknowledge him: O be not guilty of that great imprudence, to put off and trifle away a sure season of gracious benign acceptance, and by thy so doing run thy self upon the woful hazard of having the door of Grace and Mercy shut and bolted against thee, which now by its standing wide open invites thy entrance, but lay hold upon the now season as the acceptable time, the day of salvation.

3. Consider, now in the dayes of thy youth is the best, the fittest time to remember thy Creator, because this is acceptable to him, worthy of him, (as I may so speak) but to put him off to elder years, to old age, is to offer him great indignity, and cannot but be exceeding provoking, he is worthy of the first and best to whom thou owest thy all, and to devote and dedicate to him the morning of thy time, the flower and strength of thy age, this is worthy of him; this God takes well, takes kindly, you may see how affectionately, how pathetically God bespeaks *Israel* upon this account, *Jer. 2. 2. Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember the kindness of thy youth, he takes this so well, he accepts this so kindly, that he will after pass by many backslidings and infirmities, as you may see by what follows in the beginning of the next Chapter: God will not easily cast off such as early cleave unto him. Honour the Lord with thy substance, (as it is *Prov. 3. 9.*) and with the first fruits of all thine increase;*

'tis applicable to what we are, as well as what we have to our selves, our abilities of body and minde, as well as our outward estates, and by it we see that God challengeth our whole, but he layes a peculiar claim as it were to our *first* and *best*, as to the *first-fruits* of old. To put him off then with the *worst* and *last*, the dregs of thy time, the decays of thy strength, what is it? to think to put him off thus, how unworthy, how provoking is it? Will the flesh, and world, and Devil be first minded, regarded, served, shall these go away with the *first* and *best* of thy time, strength, abilities, which is Gods due, and will it be enough to put him off at last with the dregs and leavings of last; dost thou thus require the Lord? O think what contempt this reflects upon God, what indignity is hereby done him, how unworthy, how unreasonably thou art dealing with him and how provoking it must needs be to him; think of the argument in the Text, *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;*

Thou art now in thy prime, in thy strength, in thy flower, thy spirit is lively, thy memory fresh, all thy abilities strong and vigorous, but this will not always last, the impotent, unpleasant, listless times of old age are halting upon thee. Now therefore Remember him, do not put him off till then; Alas man, to delay now while he calls upon thee, now in the dayes of thy youth to remember him, with purposes and intendments of doing it hereafter, what is it, but implicitly to say the first and best is too good for God, when thou hast laid out the prime and choice of thy time and abilities elsewhere, thou art purposing and intending to reserve for and bestow the refuse, the leavings upon him; when the world and flesh have drunk up the wine of thy strength and time (as I may so speak) then God shall have the lees: Oh man, is not this the very reason why the call of God to remember him so little prevails with thee, but that thou art putting off and delaying of it; is it not this, because thou hast other lovers to take up thy present thoughts; hence men hope they may mind their pleasures in their youth, and then hope they may mind the world in their middle age. In elder years they hope, they purpose and intend to remember their Creator, nor would they intend him this allowance neither, but that they know the dayes of their youth will not alwayes last, and that the dayes of old age and death must and will overtake them; God is made a meer reserve, they will amuse the world, their pleasures while they may, and misde God at last because they needs must, upon the account of a meer self-necessity. Is it not very thus with thee man, and dost thou think this will do? is it reasonable, is it right, is it equall, thy self being Judge, that the first fruits,

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may the whole harvest it may be, the flower of thy youth, and the strength of thine age, shall be elsewhere bestowed, and God put off with the after gleanings; is this right, is it equall, is it worthy thy Maker man, that the flesh and world, and devil, should skim the Cream and drink the top, be first and best served; and the God that made thee, maintains thee, and must save thee or thou perishest everlastingly, be served with the last and worst? Look into *Mal. 1. 14.* *Cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing; for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts; and my name is dreadful among the heathen. Dwell a little upon that sad text; doth it not suit thy case? thou mayest (and probably wilt) put a cheat upon thy own poor immortal soul, but will God be mocked? let me tell thee, that not unfeldome the dregs of Gods anger come to their portion, that are presuming to put him off with the dregs of their Age; take heed man, lest it prove thy case; thou mayest (Esau-like) finde no place for repentance (not really in thy self, nor yet with God); though thou seek it carefully with tears; thou mayest mourn in the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed; and say, How have I hated instruction? thou mayest sorrowfully remember in thy shrivell'd Age, when thou hast run thy course, and worn out thy time and strength in the service of sin; and art now dropping into another world, and addressing to the fire, the reasonable instructions thou sometime hadst; thou mayest howl upon thy bed in last, when the sorrows of death compass thee about; and the pains of hell get hold upon thee; thou mayest then profess to repent and turn to God, when thou canst enjoy the world, serve the flesh no longer; but will God call such hypocritical sorrow, meely to save thy own skin, such a seeming conversion? Real Repentance? mayest thou not expect that God will make thee the same answer, which it is said he did to a wretched old man; who now being ready to die, would needs repent and turn to God, *Ubi consumpsisti farinam ibi consume farinam*, Where thou hast spent thy flower there go spend thy bran? mayest thou not justly dread that God will none of thy dregs? Thou art now running out thy life in a wretched forgetfulness of God, and thinkest to cure all by a taking on to repent, and crying God mercy at last; but hast thou not cause to fear that when at last cast, in old Age, upon a death-bed, when going out of the world, thou art crying him Mercy, that God will send thee in the day of distress to the gods whom thou hast served to save thee? that he will say to thee, *Nay, now thou make an end as thou hast begun, make thy best of that thou hast esteemed better and remembered more than me, I will none of thy leavings; the world and thy lusts have had thy first fruits, thy main harvest, let them take thy gleanings too.* O take heed*

heed man, lest it come to this; but now, O now, in the time of acceptance make haste to turn unto him.

4. And lastly, Consider, *now in the dayes of thy youth* is the best, the choicest, and most advantageous season to *remember thy Creator*, because hereby thou shalt best provide (most abundantly, most surely) for thy own good and comfort, as is notoriously evident. But to instance briefly in three things.

1. Hereby much sin, and consequently much sorrow, many tears and temptations, many a sad thought will be prevented: thou canst not but know (if thou knowest any thing) that every day thou art deferring and putting off to remember God, every day thou art going on to forget, neglect, disacknowledge him, thou art making work for Repentance, thou art hereby laying up sorrow for thy self, if God shall hereafter give thee Repentance; or if not, *treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of Gods righteous judgement*: Thy present neglect most obviously runs thee upon this dilemma, either many sorrows, sad throws of heart, if God peradventure will give thee Repentance here, or eternal sorrow in the place of sorrow, where there is nothing but *weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth* hereafter, and who would wittingly make a rod for his own back? who would willingly persevere in a course of laying up sorrow for himself? who would do knowingly, continue to do that, that he must sorrowfully undo, or suffer eternally for? who would thus wilfully make work for Repentance? Believe it man, if ever God give thee sound Repentance, *Repentance unto life*, thou wilt finde sin evil and bitter enough, thou needest not aggravate it, when thou indeed comest to make work for Repentance, thou wilt then know what it is to have made so much work of Repentance, when God shall set thy sins, thy neglects of him, a course of forgetting, slighting, contemning him, that thou hast long run on in, *in order before thee*, though it be in order to thy Humiliation, Repentance, Conversion, it may make thee with again and again thou hadst never stood out so long, and stored up so much sorrow for thy own soul. Let me here intimate to you a little more particularly two or three things, I will but intimate them, though well worthy your serious consideration. (1.) As we have been saying, Be sure the more thou multiplieth to sin, the longer thou art going on in a course of forgetting God, the more thou art multiplying thy own sorrows if God vouchsafe thee Repentance. (2.) Late Conversions are like Births in those that are ancient, not without much difficulty, a hard travail, many throws, difficult deliverance: God saveth some, though more seldomly, that have longer put him off, but it is then *so as by fire*, as the Apostle speaks.

speaks, 1 Cor. 3.15. or as it is *Jude ver. 22. 23.* And of some have compassion, making a difference, and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire: so God acts, such a difference he makes, in seasoning some with his grace in their young and tender years, and more easily working them to himself, whilst others that run on are saved with fear, and pulled as brands out of the fire; many fears, heart-misgiving, despairing thoughts such are ordinarily attended with, God commonly makes those that long put off, a *Magur-missabib* if ever he shew them mercy: such are more seldom humbled, converted, saved, and when they are, it is not without much ado. (3.) The sins of youth, which such have deeply run into, and long run on in, (though God do at last recover them by a sound and soaking Repentance, and save them through much fear and terror) remain many times a *Corrosive* gnawing upon their Spirits all their dayes, the sting of such and such a sweet sin that they have been deeply in, sticks with them to a dying day; it is made the hypocrites portion, to have *his bones full of the sins of his youth*, Job 20.11. but it is many times the lot of such whom God hath brought home to himself by a sound Repentance, to be made to possess the iniquities of their youth, as is evident from *Jobs* complaint, Job 13.26. and *David's* prayer, *Psal.* 25.7. Upon this account, by remembring and turning to God now, thou mayest haply prevent such sins, which should God give thee hereafter Repentance, may stick with thee to a dying day, and bring down (as *Jacob* speaks) *thy gray hairs with sorrow to the grave*. See then this advantage in a present early turning unto God, it will prevent many sorrows, a great deal of sad work. O therefore take the Wise-mans counsel in the last Verse of the foregoing Chapter, *Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh*, do not put it upon thy self, but take the course, the onely wise way to remedy and prevent it, which he prescribes in the Text, *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth*.

2. As hereby much sin and sorrow will be prevented, so hereby thou shalt abundantly provide for thy own good, comfort, benefit in after-time: if God take thee sooner hence, it will be well thou art ready; if not, thou wilt abundantly reap in thy Age the benefit and advantage, the good and comfort of thy early remembring and turning to God. *Touth or Spring* (as one saith) is the *Seed-time of grace and godliness*: if in the Spring no Seed be sown, or none but Cockle or Darnel, or such Weeds, what hope of Harvest, or what a Harvest may be expected? Forgetfulness of God in time of youth, causeth old Age to perish, to be good for nothing; so some carry the sense of that, *Job* 30. 2. *In whom old age*

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was perished, i.e. their old Age was good for nothing; but an early Seeds-time is a good presage of, and preparatory to a plentiful Harvest of grace, joy, and comfort in after-times. Consider more particularly a few things here, but to touch them. (1.) To remember and turn to God, to be good, take a right course betimes, is the way to be settledly good, to be settled and established in the way of God and godliness in Age; the sooner thou art seasoned with right principles, pious principles in youth, the more deeply and indelibly will they be rivetted into thee in Age, *Prov. 22. 6. Train up a childe in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* The Proverb is, *A young Quiver and an old Devil*: but the Spirit of God knows better, and tells us, *A Saint in youth, and an established Saint in Age*; that which is sucked in in youth, and a person is then seasoned with, becomes well rooted and settled in him in Age. As it is a dreadfull thing to grow Aged in sin, because such are hardly removed: so is it a happy thing to grow Aged in Grace and Godliness; because such are most firmly established: but the onely way to this, is to begin betimes. (2.) To remember, turn to God betimes, to begin to be indeed good early, is the ready way to be good indeed, to be eminently good; a forward Spring and Seeds-time, is here the forerunner of a plentiful Harvest; as he that begins betimes, and long continues to drive a gainfull trade, is long in taking in and treasuring up, must needs be well stored and furnished, so it is with the early Christian in his age, he is rich in grace, in spiritual experiences, &c. Those ordinarily are most fat and flourishing, and bring forth most fruit in their age, that begin betimes. Oh think, how rich in knowledge, practicall saving knowledge, how strong in faith, how intimately acquainted with God, how humble, holy and heavenly minded, how abounding in every grace, and rich in all manner of good works, mightest thou be, wouldst thou be persuaded now in the dayes of thy youth to remember thy Creator. O be indeed good, godly now, this is the way to be good indeed, eminently good and godly. (3.) The last advantage that I shall name as to this, that thou shalt have by an early turning unto God, is this, It will greates thy reward in heaven, none shall serve God for nought, begin quickly, and hold on carefully and cheerfully, thou shalt lose nothing by it, *1 Cor. 15. 58. indeed the reward is not of work, it is of grace, but yet it is according to work,* *2 Cor. 9. 6. begin ever so soon, and follow it ever so diligently, and continue ever so long, thou shalt then receive a full reward for every moments service.*

3. And lastly, Hereby thy own good and comfort shall be as most abundantly, so most certainly provided for. Do it now, and then thou wilt

wilt be sure to do it; but neglect it *now*, and thou art not certain of a future time to attend it. Were there nothing in all that hath been already said, yet one would think there were enough in this one Consideration, were it seriously thought upon, to put an issue to all thought of delaying, and putting off, and put thee upon a *now present remembering God*, without more ado, or whiling it off any longer. *Childhood and Youth are vanity*; it is the Argument in the last words of the former Chapter, by which the Exhortation in the Text to a *timely remembering God*, is as it were ushered in; and were it laid to heart, sure it would make thee lay by all delays. Thy flourishing Youth, man, (O think of it) is fickle, sitting, frail, subject to Death as well as old Age, *Job. 4. 14. For what is your life? it is even a vapour*: Man's life in general is so, the young man's life is even a vapour as well as the old man's, as we see in continual experience. Death's Motto is *Nulli Cedo, I give place to, I spare none*. We are like *Venice-glasses*; not those that are first made are first broke, but those that are first knockt. Death is often sudden and unexpected in its approaches; the *evil day* is very nigh sometimes, when men are putting it furthest off: The fool in the Gospel-Parable lessons us, how prone we are to cast up our Accounts for *many years*, when it may be we have not *one night to live*. The notion of Death is too apt to look to all men, especially to young men, like *Ezekiel's Vision, Chap. 42. 27. The Vision that he seeth is for many dayes*, and he prophesieth of times that are afar off. Young men look it may be on the gray-headed as well on their way to the Grave, and haply think it is time for old men to think of dying, but from themselves they put it at a great distance; but most true it is, that *Senibus Mors in janua adolescentibus in insidiis*, Death is oftentimes as near the young mans back as it is the old mans face, even while he saith of Death, (as the unfaithful Servant in the Gospel of his Lord) *He delayeth his coming*, it cometh in a day when he looketh not for it, and in an hour when he is not aware of, and calleth him off, and sendeth him (unprepared as he is) to the Land of *Darkness*, whence there is no redemption. O think man, hath not death surprized many a poor unprovided sinner, that put the *evil day* far off as confidently, and upon as good grounds as thy self? Hath not Death prevented many a careless inconsiderate Loyerer, who looked as little for his coming as thou doest, and whose purposes for the future were as hopeful as thine now are? Hast thou not followed many a one to the Grave, that had as probable Arguments for a longer life as any thou canst have? Continual experience tells thee, it is not thy

Youth, or, Health and Strength, that can save thee, or so much as a little while Reprieve the Arrest of Death; how dost thou dare then to put off one day, when thou knowest not but it may be thy putting by for ever? Do but suppose (a dreadful yet probable supposition) while thou art putting off and delaying a little, and yet a little longer, Death should step in and prevent thee: O me-thinks this Argument, if nothing else will, should effectually deterre thee from loytering, and throughly awaken thee to a *now remembering thy Creator.*

I have said what I shall say upon this Text, beseeching you that it may be thought upon, and beseeching God to give his blessing: But I have another Subject, that I must crave a few minutes time, and a grain or two of patience more, to say something of; and that is the *Youngman lately deceased*, at whose *Request*, and as whose *Request*, you have had this Sermon; and it is not the *Commendation of the dead* that is the thing intended, he needs it not, but the *Instruction of the living*. As his Death in the time and manner of it was a real Sermon upon the Text, of which we have been speaking, so (in other respect) was his Life also in some good degree: and I have two sayings (to young men especially upon this Subject). 1. In some things observable in him as to his Life, he was a *Patern for your Imitation*. 2. In some things observable about him as to his Death, he was an *Example for your Admonition*.

First, In some things observable in him as to his Life, he was a *Patern for your Imitation*: but to intimate some few things of special remark.

1. He was a young man of an *innocent Conversation*, of a *civil, sober Behaviour*; he was not of a debauched dissolute life, nor did he run with others to that excess of riot which (with sad hearts) we see many young men do; his Conversation was not spotted with such marks of debility, as are too visible upon too many of his Age. Now though Civility, Sobriety, Morality, are not Grace, yet they are *jewels of price*, that have an amiableness and loveliness both in the eyes of God and good men: it is said of the young man in the Gospel-story (in *Mark 10.21.*) that when Christ had heard from him what he had done, how he had lived, that he was a civil, sober, moral man (though evident it is by the story that he was a stranger to the power of godliness) that *Jesus beholding him, loved him*. Not but that I am persuaded better things of the young man of whom we are speaking, and things that have accompanied salvation, though I thus speak: but to shew you, that a meer Civil, Sober, Moral man is otherwise by God looked upon, then others are that

that are Scandalous and Profane: Christ hath a *common love* even to the better sort of ungodly men, more then to the worst; a civil, sober, outwardly conformable life, hath its account with God: not that I would have you rest here, I hope his Example led you higher.

2. He was a young man of a *serious Spirit*, he had some real weight with him, and worth in him. It is said of him by those of the Family where he formerly sojourned amongst us for some time, and now lately died and took his leave of this world, *That they never heard a vain misbecoming word come out of his mouth*; and his Conversation was according: he was not vainly given, nor spent his time in Drinking, Gaming, Company-keeping, as many do, but was much in Reading, and took delight, when his other business afforded him any leisure, to be amongst his Books and Papers; and very ready he was upon occasion for the help of others upon such accounts. Alas, a young man of a *serious Spirit*, that is of some *weight and worth*, that is something besides meer froth and vanity, that mindes something worthy a man, is too rare a sight amongst us. Oh the exceeding vanity of the younger sort! (and too many of the elder too) Alas, what a meer *Bubble of Vanity*, wrapped up in a bundle of fine Clothes, is many a young Man, many a Maid? their clothing may be costly, but their hearts, their mindes (as the Wise-man speaks, *Prov. 10. 20.*) *are little worth*. O how empty are they of all that is of worth, that good is, but running over with meer vanity, and *superfluity of naughtiness*, as the Apostle speaks, *1 am. 1. 21.* Mens mindes and mowthes run over with very froth and vanity, scarce a serious thought in the one, or a sober savoury word in the other; not a Bible or a good Book in hand the week long it may be: you had a better Example in him then this comes to.

3. This young man (as is credibly testified of him) was a *dutifull Child* to his Parents; he was inured to bear the yoke from his youth: He could almost say, as the Son in the Parable to his Father, *Luke 15. 29.* *Neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment.* Never but once (as himself was saying to an intimate Friend of his not long before his death) was he unseasonably absent from his Fathers Family in all his life. Young men, I am afraid it is not once, nor twice, nor thrice, nor ten times, that will excuse some of you. 'Tis the complaint of Parents, of Masters, (and a sad complaint it is) that they cannot keep their Children, their Servants in, but that they will be out at all hours; and if you observe, the bottom-Argument is, *Others do so, and they must and will*. O that you would be perswaded to follow his better Example.

4. To adde no more : He was a young man that *seemed to savour of, and affect the best things.* What is said of young Abijah, 1 King. 14. 13. appeared very hopeful concerning him, that *in him there was found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel.* I do not doubt but that it may be truly said of him, That he had more Sermons by him of his own hand-writing, not onely then the most of the young men in *Fairfield*, but then most of his Age have. His writing Sermons at Meeting was commendable and imitable, as also the after-improvement that he made of them ; his Notes were not laid by as useless, or served to put under Pies, but they were overlook'd and repeated by himself, and to others as occasion offered. The Sermons that he took here the last Winter (as I am informed) have been since called over in his Fathers Family. That he was ready and forward upon such accounts, is the account that such give of him that best knew him ; and as to this, there is one thing more that would not be omitted, That when he came now lately out of the *Bay*, a little before his last Sickness, that being at Sea upon the Sabbath, and seeing the Morning well spent, and nothing going forward of a Sabbath-dayes work, he began to minde them (though the youngest of the Company) of the Day, and Duty thereunto belonging, desiring they might go to Prayer, and he would repeat a Sermon to them, which accordingly he did both Forenoon and Afternoon. Young men, let I beseech you his Example upon these accounts Provoke your Imitation.

Secondly, As in these things observable in him as to his *Life*, he was a *Pattern for your Imitation* ; so in some things observable about him as to his *Death*, he was an *Example for your Admonition*. Very briefly but to touch upon two or three things, lest I utterly tire you.

1. The *Time of his Death*, being in the flower of his Age, little more then Eighteen, is for your *Admonition*, to Remember now your Creator in the *dayes of your youth*, who are now in your blossom : he was not arrived at the strength of his Age, he was but newly come as it were to years of discretion ; Art thou past a Child ? dost thou begin to understand thy self ? it is dangerous for thee to put off God, the remembering thy Creator not for a longer, but for any time : Art thou Fifteen, Sixteen, Eighteen years old ? it is too great an adventure to put it off till thou art Twenty, or One and twenty. Thou art young, and strong, and lusty, and thinkest thou mayest more boldly adventure, measuring thy Life by thy Age and Constitution ; but are these certain Evidences as to adventure thy Soul upon ? are these such infallible Probabilities as to run the hazard of thy hopes for Heaven upon ? The Example that is before thee

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in this young man (whom Death scarce suffered to be called a man) may convince thee of the contrary. O who would not be alwayes ready, when his Summons are so exceeding uncertain.

2. The *Manner of his Sicknes* is Admonitory also, and may lesson you this, That it is good doing your great Work before the evil dayes of Sicknes come. Alas, there is little time, room, opportunity or ability then, A pained Body, a distempered Brain, a disturbed Spirit, disability of Speech, necessary Rest, and these and those Attendances, incapacitate, divert, take up the time, and leave men commonly but a sorry opportunity of doing any thing to purpose for their Souls. I was with him divers times in his Sicknes, yet had opportunity but once to say any thing to purpose to him; one while flumbering, another while distempered in his Head, or busily taken up by his bodily necessities and attendances. O man, Death may snatch thee away suddenly, it doth not give every one a week or ten dayes warning; but if not, a leisurely Sicknes may afford thee little leisure for thy Soul.

3. How it was with him in his Sicknes too, how his Spirit wrought, may admonish you to make thorow work of your great Work. It was difficult to him to speak from an obstruction in his Throat, and somewhat difficult to understand him when he did speak, and so the less can be said; but so much in substance might be gathered from him, That he looked upon himself an undone man without an interest in Jesus Christ; yet he was not without some hope that he was at peace with God in him, yet not without fears, bemoaning himself in respect of his hardness of heart and blindness of minde, and that he had been no more thoroughly wrought upon by the Means that he had formerly enjoyed. O Sirs, Dying times are Trying times; to die causlessly confidently I am afraid is too common, but to die groundedly comfortably is a great work. O do, do thoroughly what thou hast to do, man, when Death comes thou wilt not finde it is too well done.

Jacob Meser

Huldah Meser

Joseph

Abraham

Jacob

Peris

Huldah

Jarah

Stephen

Henry

1906
#ctt.

